

No. 3092

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL FOR THE FAR EAST

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, et al

- vs -

ARAKI Sadao et al

Sworn Deposition (Translation)

Deponent : -- HIRAKA, Junzo

Having first duly sworn an oath as on attached sheet and in accordance with the procedure followed in my country I hereby depose as follows.

1. My name is HIRAKA, Junzo. I was born in the Hiroshima Prefecture on January 1, 1890, the 23rd year of Meiji, and appointed second lieutenant in the Army on Dec. 25, 1912, the 1st year of Taisho. After having passed, since then, through ordinary courses in the Army, I was appointed an attache to the Commander of the Burma Area Army in March, 1943, and remained in the same post to the end of the war. I was Colonel at the time of surrender. I am now detained in Sugamo Prison.

2. In the last part of February, 1944, I was appointed to hold the additional post of the adviser to the Burmese Government and had, thereafter, comparatively many opportunities to contact

with the important men, in the Burmese Government presided over
by Dr. Bahmo:

3. Gen. KIMURA, who assumed his post as the Commander of the Burmese Area Army in the middle of September, 1944, amidst the most difficult situation both politically and strategically since the Impahl operation, made it his special concern to secure the confidence of the Burmese people. So since his first arrival, he took advantage of every possible opportunity to emphasize its importance and to warn the soldiers under his command, as well as the Japanese residents in Burma, to that effect.

4. Since the latter part of October, 1944, Gen. KIMURA had several close conversations with many leading men of the Burmese Government. Every time when I happened to attend, he listened earnestly to the Burmese, letting them frankly advance their opinions without reserve at each meeting for five or six hours. Picking up suggestions for improvement presented, he transmitted them to those concerned immediately for correction.

These talks were heartily received by all Burmese leaders. The Burmese feelings toward Japan were greatly improved through these meetings.

5. Gen. KIMURA, Ambassador ISHII and Dr. BAHMO had regular talks, at least once a month, and tried to promote mutual understandings. Since about February, 1945, the strategical situation

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in Burma became worse day by day and the living conditions of the Burmese people became worse also. So Gen. KIMURA often forewarned his staff officers that though they were preoccupied by pressure of severe operational demands, they must not forget the feelings of the Burmese people, and that they should not lose their popularity with the Burmese, even at the sacrifice of some part of the military operations, and had directed the release of some textile goods from the Japanese Army to the Burmese civilians, and the limitation of the quantity of grain purchased by the Japanese Army. Furthermore, I often witnessed the scenes in the Departmental Chief Conference or other occasions, in which he was urging the Chief of the Medical Department of the Army under his assignment to promote medical relief for the sick and wounded caused by bombardment, etc., among the Burmese people.

6. Listening personally to the peoples' voice through the Burmese leaders, Gen. KIMURA had, notwithstanding the scarcity of paper, a leaflet entitled "The Attitude to Take Toward the Burmese People" compiled, printed and distributed among soldiers and the Japanese residents. Furthermore, he had the Vice Chief of his Staff, etc., give lectures on the kindly treatment of the Burmese peoples to the important Japanese civilians in Burma.

7. Such sympathy and sincerity of Gen. KIMURA as above mentioned toward the Burmese people helped regain the Conference of the

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Burmese in the Japanese Army which has been lessening through her disadvantageous war situation in the whole Pacific battle area, especially in Burma, so that the anti-Japanese underground movements by some groups of Burmese who were arising since the rainy season of 1944 was temporarily stopped.

It was about November, 1944, that many Burmese leaders, comprising Dr. Bahmo, Mr. Takin Miya (Vice Premier), Mr. U Ton Aun (Minister of Cooperation), Mr. Takin Tanton (Minister of Demand and Supply) and Mr. Uba Win (Home Minister) told me that they were happy to have a benevolent Commander with good understanding good will and deep sympathy toward Burma, and that they expected that the anti-Japanese atmosphere which was appearing in some groups of the Burmese would probably be swept away.

8. In February, 1945, when the war situation in many districts was at a most adverse stage to Japan, the handcraft exhibition was held at Rangoon under the sponsorship of the Japanese and attracted the Burmese numbering from 50,000 to 100,000 every day. Furthermore, movie theatres in Rangoon City, numbering seven or eight in all, were almost packed every day and night even after the rebellion of the National Defense Army in the latter part of March of the same year.

9. At the time of evacuation of the Japanese Army from Rangoon, General KILURA, having deliberately decided not to

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incur the war disaster upon the Burmese people, prohibited, by order, the burning of the property of the Burmese people. At the evacuation, furthermore, he left the Burmese leaders to do as they liked and so a half of the ministers remained in Rangoon.

10. As the adviser to the Burmese Government, I sometimes heard the Burmese Government complain of the junior grade Japanese military men and civilians, but I never heard, during the tenure of my office, of the cruelty committed by the soldiers of the Burma Area Army spoken of by either Governmental authorities or the people.

On this 8 day of July 1947

At I. M. T. F. E.

DEPONENT /S/ HIRAOKI, Junzo (seal)

I, KORETSUNE, Tatsumi, hereby certify that the above statement was sworn by the Deponent, who affixed his signature and seal thereto in the presence of this witness.

On the same date

At the same place

Witness: (signed) /S/ KORETSUNE, Tatsumi (seal)

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OATH

In accordance with my conscience I swear to tell the whole truth withholding nothing and adding nothing.

/S/ HIRAOKA Junzo(seal)